

Section 6: Close the Loop!

Buy Recycled

As every business person knows, success is a function of consumer interest in your product or service.

Over the past decade, the recycled product manufacturing industry has grown by leaps and bounds due to an ever-growing supply of recyclable material and demand for recycled-content products. As demand has grown, the variety of these products has expanded, while the cost to consumers has declined.

Why Buy Recycled?

In Montgomery County, businesses generate approximately 50% of the County's waste, or roughly 500,000 tons each year. The County requires businesses to recycle in order to minimize the amount of waste going to the incinerator or other disposal sites.

In order to keep recycling viable, businesses need to progress beyond recycling by buying recycled-content products. This step is known as “closing the loop”; in effect, completing the recycling process.

Buying recycled-content products ensures there are markets for goods that contain recycled materials. When your business buys recycled, it helps ensure the success of Montgomery County's recycling program.

By buying recycled-content products, you also help create long-term, stable markets for recyclable materials, which ultimately drives down the consumer prices of these goods. Today, many recycled-content products already cost less than their counterparts made of virgin materials.

The manufacture of products from recycled materials also reduces our dependence on virgin raw materials and often saves energy over virgin manufacturing processes. It also can reduce air & water pollution.

Buying recycled could also make a difference in how your customers and clients see you. Many businesses now are demanding recycled-content products from their vendors. Some consultants are finding buy-recycled clauses in their clients' contracts.

Finally, buying recycled may save your business money because it can reduce your procurement costs over the long term.

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Who Buys Recycled?

Buying recycled not only sounds good in theory, but is working in practice—both in Montgomery County and throughout the country.

The Calvert Group in Bethesda established a buy-recycled policy in 1990, although the company actually began buying recycled in 1982. The Calvert Group's vendors know about this policy, and provide Calvert Group with a range of products to suit its needs. One vendor even held a buy-recycled show for Calvert Group employees, so they could see and learn about the variety of recycled-content products on the market. In 1994 alone, Calvert Group purchased over \$2.5 million worth of recycled-content products, including recycled paper, marketing and other printed materials and other office supplies.

The Montgomery County Department of Parks purchases a variety of recycled-content office supplies like paper, paper products and toner cartridges. In addition, it has purchased carpeting, landscape timbers and park benches made with recycled content.

The U.S. Government has created the largest buy-recycled program in the country. These programs benefit all businesses, not only because they are excellent models of buy-recycled programs that work, but because their size has helped drive the price of recycled-content products down for everyone.

Within the U.S. Government, all agencies must establish buy-recycled programs. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed guidelines for the purchase of recycled paper products, re-refined lubricating oil, retread tires, building insulation products, and concrete & cement containing fly ash. EPA has proposed 21 additional recycled-content products be added to the list.

How To Buy Recycled

Establish a Policy

The first step to setting up a buy-recycled program is to establish a buy-recycled policy for your business. It will lay the groundwork for all your purchases. Your policy can include all or some of the following elements:

- a general preference for recycled products
- a price preference, whereby your business is willing to pay a higher price (such as 5 or 10 percent or greater) for recycled paper or recycled products
- a set-aside or goal where a certain percentage of total purchases must have recycled content

Pre-consumer vs. Post-consumer: What's the Difference?

These two terms are used to indicate the source of recycled material that goes into recycled-content products.



Examples of pre-consumer materials include materials generated by converting rolls of paper into envelopes, unsold newspapers and magazines, and plastic materials generated during production and not used by final consumers. Most industries already recover and use a large percentage of pre-consumer waste because it tends to be cleaner, easier to use and higher in value. In the paper industry, nearly 90 percent of pre-consumer waste is already recovered by manufacturers and therefore does not enter into the solid waste stream.

Post-consumer materials would generally end up being disposed of if they are not recycled. Therefore, purchases of recycled products must emphasize the use of post-consumer materials in order to create markets for these materials.

To be successful, everyone must subscribe to and play a role in enforcing the policy. Management should establish the policy and evaluate it for changes when necessary. Purchasing agents and buyers must integrate the policy into their procurement practices and procedures, and monitor recycled products for their effectiveness. Other staff can play a role by specifying recycled products in print bids, publicizing the buy-recycled policy and providing feedback on successes (and failures) of recycled products.

Research the Market

Buying recycled may be a brand-new concept for your business. Like anything new, it will require you to do a little research to determine what is right for you. There are three considerations to keep in mind when shopping for recycled goods—availability, quality and cost. Examine these issues before making a purchase.

Availability— When the first *Official Recycled Products Guide* was published in 1989, it listed 170 manufacturers and vendors of recycled products. Four years later, the same publication contained more than 4,500 listings. The availability and variety of products has increased dramatically. However, many buyers are still not aware of how the marketplace for recycled goods has changed.

The first place to look for information is from your current vendors. They are familiar with your business and should know your needs. If they can't help you, ask around within your industry or read trade journals—many of these have published helpful information about buying recycled.

Quality— Don't be put off by the outdated notion that recycled products are inferior. In the past, some recycled products did compare unfavorably to products made from new materials. But increased demand and major changes in technology have resulted in improved products that are competitive in quality with virgin goods.

Cost— Another mistake is to assume that recycled products are more expensive than equivalent virgin products. In fact, some recycled products are already less expensive than their virgin counterparts. Comparison shopping, bulk purchases, competitive bid processes and calculating the life-cycle cost of a product are the best ways to control costs. Look around for vendors that are willing to help you find the products you want.

Require Contractors To Use Recycled Products

Many of the products and services your business obtains are secured through contractual arrangements and grant agreements. These provide an excellent opportunity to expand your buying power by encouraging outside contractors to use recycled products in their service to you. For example, you can require printers to use recycled paper and non-toxic inks for all printing jobs.

You can also request that any organization doing business with you use recycled products.

Purchase Cooperatively To Reduce Costs

If some recycled-content products are beyond your buy-recycled policy's limit, consider purchasing them through cooperative arrangements with other businesses.

Cooperative purchasing is a system by which similar businesses save money by pooling their purchases into a single bid instead of buying products individually.

Cooperative purchasing is an old concept that has a new application: purchasing recycled products. Cooperative purchasing may sacrifice a bit of your purchasing authority, but offers many benefits:

- lower unit costs
- increased volume of recycled purchases
- increased buying-recycled participation among more businesses
- increased availability of recycled products

Businesses which participate in cooperative purchasing arrangements buy off the same contract, so definitions, percentages and standards are the same. This allows manufacturers to produce these items in larger quantities as regular stock items rather than as specialty items.

Evaluate What Products Your Business Can Use

The paper industry was one of the first to market its products as containing recycled content, so most early buy-recycled efforts concentrated on procuring recycled paper, especially printing and writing papers. However, many of today's office products are available with recycled content, so your recycled-content purchases conceivably could reach to all aspects of your business.

To determine which products fit your business needs, follow these three steps:

1. Review current purchases to determine which recycled products are already being purchased.
2. Examine product specifications to determine if the maximum amount of recycled materials (and post-consumer waste) is being requested.
3. Examine product and contract lists to determine where you can substitute recycled products for virgin products or include recycled products in future bids. The list below will give you a good idea of the range of recycled-content products currently on the market.

Office products

- printing and writing papers
- tissue and towel products
- trash can liners
- office supplies (bulletin boards, calendars, folders, letter openers, note holders and trays, pens, pencils, push pins, rulers, scissors)
- trash and recycling containers
- refurbished office equipment
- recycled toner cartridges
- paper and plastic pallets
- packaging material
- furniture
- carpet

Vehicle fleets

- re-refined oil
- recycled antifreeze
- retread tires
- auto parts
- solvents

Construction products

- building insulation
- compost/mulch
- cement and concrete containing fly ash
- wallboard
- plastic (partitions, decking, fences/posts, parking stops and drain pipe)

Transportation products

- plastics (a-frames, fences, guardrail, posts, traffic cones, etc.)
- compost/mulch along roads
- asphalt (rubberized asphalt/glassphalt)
- benches (bus stops, etc.)

Recreation and parks

- plastic lumber (benches, picnic tables, playgrounds, etc.)
- compost/mulch

Other products

- absorbents
- bags (paper and plastic)
- yard waste containers
- curbside collection containers
- used clothing and rags
- food service containers (paper and plastic)
- flooring
- mats (plastic and rubber)
- animal bedding
- packaging materials
- shower dividers/toilet partitions/wall panels
- industrial wipers (paper)
- urinal screens

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Where Can I Get More Information and Assistance?

Maryland Environmental Service (MES) has developed a *Buy Recycled Training Manual* and training program designed to assist businesses in expanding their buy recycled programs. The Manual is a comprehensive, instructional guide designed to teach agencies how to set up programs to buy recycled products.

This manual includes information on the importance of buying recycled products; legislation and content standards (including information on the federal Executive Order); writing specifications; testing products; purchasing options such as cooperative purchasing, closed loop recycling and indirect purchases; waste reduction; and record keeping and evaluation. It also includes an appendix of information on recycled products and standards and information on recycled product suppliers in Maryland. Several sections of this chapter were excerpted from the Manual. MES also has developed a one day training program for businesses that discusses the topics described above and includes interactive exercises such as listing the key elements in a specification for recycled products.

For additional information contact MES at 410-729-8531.

The **Buy Recycled Business Alliance (BRBA)** was founded by the National Recycling Coalition with the intent of promoting market development and procurement of recycled-content products. The Alliance is a nationwide effort, led by private businesses, to encourage their peers in the private sector to increase the use of recycled-content products in their day-to-day operations.

Businesses can join the alliance at no cost, and receive technical assistance and information, peer counseling on any aspect of buying recycled, the *Buy Recycled Guide Book* (a step-by-step guide to help evaluate recycled-content products), special assistance at Buy Recycled seminars held by the Alliance throughout the country and a quarterly newsletter. For more information, contact BRBA at 1325 G Street, NW, Suite 1025, Washington, DC 20005, 202-347-0450 (phone) or 202-347-0449 (fax).

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When Should I Publicize My Buy-Recycled Effort?



Continually. Mention your buy-recycled program in reports and send out news releases about how many recycled products are purchased, how much money is spent and what the products are. The publicity is good for your business and it will encourage other businesses to develop similar programs.

How To Keep Track of Your Program

As you implement your program to buy recycled products, establish a record-keeping and evaluation system. It will help you monitor the success of the program, allow you to publicize your efforts and exchange information with other businesses.

Set up a system to designate each recycled product in your purchasing reports (a separate code number or other distinction will suffice). The following work sheet outlines the information you will need for your records.

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Work Sheet for Recycled Product Purchases

Product or Service Purchased _____

Number of Units Requested _____

Contract Number _____ Duration of Contract _____

Buyer _____

Using Department _____

Percentage and definition of recycled content requested in bid

Pre-consumer _____% Post-consumer _____% Total recycled content _____%

Bidders (circle successful bidder)

	Bidder	Pre-consumer	Post-consumer	Total	Price
1.					
2.					
3.					

Price Preference Paid (if any) _____

Was this a cooperative purchase? _____ If yes, list participants below:

Total dollars/units purchased (vendors should be required to provide information on actual usage)

Was there any good or bad feedback from users?

RECYCLED PRODUCTS GUIDE

This SORRT Resource List identifies companies that sell recycled paper, paper products, and other products that contain recycled material. Montgomery County has compiled this listing through various sources and does not present it as a complete directory of all vendors that service Montgomery County, nor offer it as an endorsement of any of the companies. **This list is current as of May 2004.**

IF YOU'RE NOT BUYING RECYCLED, YOU'RE NOT FULLY RECYCLING.

FULLY CLOSE THE RECYCLING LOOP. One factor influencing the stability and long-term success of recycling programs is the market condition for recyclable materials. If there is strong demand for products and materials manufactured from recyclables, then there is a constant need for greater supply of recycled feedstock. This situation then helps to ensure that there are viable markets for the materials which you separate from the trash and recycle. Therefore, it is vital to keep up (and even increase) demand for recycled products and materials; your organization helps to increase this critical demand.

"BUY RECYCLED" Support recycling by purchasing recycled items. Quality and variety of products are improving. Pricing is, in many instances, comparable to pricing for virgin materials. Recycled paper varieties include – colored paper, white office paper, computer paper, card stock, envelopes, bathroom tissue, and hand towels. When ordering, ask for paper made from the highest percentage of recycled content material, preferably post-consumer.

For additional information on purchasing recycled products, see the Montgomery County Business Recycling Handbook, Section 6: Close the Loop! Buy Recycled, or contact the Montgomery County Business Recycling Program at (240) 777-6400.

RECYCLED PRODUCTS GUIDE (continued)

ABC Box Co.

1135 Leadenhall Street

Baltimore, MD 21230

(410) 752-4635

Fax (410) 752-2697

*Recycling storage containers;
cardboard boxes.*

Adams-Burch Co.

1901 Stanford Court

Landover, MD 20785

(301) 772-7850 or

(800) 347-8093

*Restaurant supply company that offers
recycling containers and recycled-content
paper products.*

Advantage Technical Services (ATS)

2328 Montgomery Street

Silver Spring, MD 20910-1253

(888) 371-2666

Fax (301) 589-6466

www.advantage-technical.com

Remanufactured toner cartridges.

AJ Stationers, Inc.

7601 Brandon Woods Blvd.

Baltimore, MD 21226

(410) 360-4900

Fax (410) 360-4291

www.ajstationers.com

Recycled paper office products.

American Laser, Inc.

5004 Jackson Street

Hyattsville, MD 20781

(301) 588-4850

Fax (301) 864-1565

Remanufactured toner cartridges.

Boise Cascade Office Products

6745 Business Park Way

Elkridge, MD 21075-6340

(410) 579-5200 or

(800) 282-6473

*Recycled paper content; remanufactured
toner cartridges.*

Bradco Supply

3404 Kenilworth Avenue

Hyattsville, MD 20781

(301) 277-7711

Fax (301) 699-9341

Roof insulation material.

Carpel Video

429 E. Patrick Street

Frederick, MD 21701

(301) 694-3500 or

(800) 238-4300

Fax (301) 694-9510

www.carpelvideo.com

Recycled videotapes.

Choisyx Business Center

4809 Lydell Road

Cheverly, MD 20781

(301) 772-7040

Fax (301) 386-4477

Remanufactured toner cartridges.

Clean Earth

1469 Oak Ridge Place

Hagerstown, MD 21740

(301) 791-6220

Fax (301) 790-1825

*Sells recycled aggregate materials and
recycled crushed materials.*

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RECYCLED PRODUCTS GUIDE (continued)

Corporate Express

7021 Dorsey Road
Hanover, MD 21076
(410) 799-7700 or
(800) 270-9689
www.cexp.com

*Sells recycled office supply products;
furniture; remanufactured toner cartridges.*

CPR Recharge

902 Cutler Court
Waldorf, MD 20602
(301) 843-2800
Fax (301) 843-0857

Remanufactured toner cartridges.

Design Recycle, Inc.

P.O. Box 638
Upper Marlboro, MD 20773
(301) 952-9137
Fax (301) 952-9791
www.designrecycleinc.com

*Rubbercrete for use in patio blocks; pavers;
drainage product runways;
highway sound barriers; pier pilings;
utility poles.*

Emanuel Tire Co.

1300 Moreland Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21216
(410) 947-0660

Supplier to tire retreading business.

Federal Hill Office Supply

1022 S. Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21230
(410) 727-0111
Fax (410) 727-1374

*Recycled printing papers; office supplies;
remanufactured toner cartridges.*

Frank Parson Paper, Inc.

2270 Beaver Road
Landover, MD 20785
(301) 386-4700
Fax (301) 773-8062

*Recycled paper products; remanufactured
toner cartridges; offers pick-up and
recycling of empty cartridges.*

Frank Parson/White-Rose Paper Co.

4665 Hollins Ferry Road
Baltimore, MD 21227
(410) 247-1900
Fax (410) 525-9378

*Remanufactured toner cartridges, recycled
paper products; recycling of empty toner
cartridges.*

Frederick Non-Profit Building Supply

105 E. South Street
Frederick, MD 21701
(301) 662-2988

Reused building materials.

RECYCLED PRODUCTS GUIDE (continued)

Gerstel Office Furniture, Inc.

584 N. Frederick Avenue
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
(301) 840-1236
Fax (301) 840-5643
Office furniture.

Greenwald Industrial

2507 51st Avenue
Hyattsville, MD 20781
(301) 773-3800 or
(800) 248-9808
Foam insulation.

Laser Printers Plus, Inc.

11226 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20902
(301) 589-7300
Fax (301) 933-9011
Computer & machine parts; computer cartridges.

Mid-Atlantic Waste Systems

10641 Cordova Road
Easton, MD 21601
(410) 820-7188 or
(800) 338-7274
Specializes in compactors.

Moore Wallace

1050 Hull Street, Suite 110
Baltimore, MD 21230
(410) 347-1550
Fax (410) 347-1558
Recycled printing papers.

Office Furniture Maintenance Corp.

8325 Old Marlboro Pike
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-2616
(301) 855-6888
Fax (301) 763-0699

Office Paper Systems, Inc.

7650 Airpark Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20879
(301) 948-6301
Fax (301) 948-6302
www.opsus.com
Recycled printing papers; recycling containers.

RIS Paper

9101 E. Hampton Drive
Capitol Heights, MD 20743
(301) 336-8833
Fax (301) 499-1214
www.rispaper.com
Recycled printing papers.

S. Freedman & Sons

3322 Pennsy Drive
Landover, MD 20785
(301) 322-5000
Fax (301) 773-8429
Recycled paper; plastic containers; janitorial/cleaning equipment.

RECYCLED PRODUCTS GUIDE (continued)

Strouber Materials

7811 Penn Western Court
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
(301) 967-9100
Fax (301) 967-3004
Ceiling tile.

The Great Outdoors

7828 Millers Corner
Elkridge, MD 21075
(410) 379-0767
Fax (410) 379-6840
Sells rubber surfacing made from re-used tires.

The Loading Dock

2523 Gwynns Falls Parkway
Baltimore, MD 21216
(410) 728-3625
Fax (410) 728-3633
www.loadingdock.org
Re-used building materials and some appliances.

Unisource

8261 Preston Court
Jessup, MD 20794
(301) 470-4063 or
(800) 344-5522
Fax (410) 792-8059
Recycled papers.

Victor Stanley, Inc.

2103 Brick House Road
Dunkirk, MD 20754
(301) 855-8300
Fax (410) 257-7579
Plastics & other containers for outdoor use.

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RECYCLED PRODUCT SUPPLIERS (continued)

Codes: 1) Office paper, 2) Office supplies, 3) Custodial papers, 4) Cardboard boxes

RECYCLED PAPER PRODUCTS

ABC Box Co.

1135 Leadenhall Street
Baltimore, MD 21230
(410) 752-4635
Fax (410) 752-2697
Code: 4

Blind Industries and Services of Maryland

2901 Strickland Street
Baltimore, MD 21223-2796
(410) 233-4567
(888) 322-4567
Fax (410) 233-0544
www.bism.org
www.supereaglesupply.com
Code: 1 (recycled paper pads), 2

Boise Cascade Office Products

6745 Business Park Way
Elkridge, MD 21075-6340
(410) 579-5200 or
(800) 282-6473
Fax (800) 572-6473
Codes: 1–4

CANUSA Corp.

1616 Shakespeare Street
Baltimore, MD 21231
(410) 522-0110
Code: 1 (paper broker)

Corporate Express

7021 Dorsey Road
Hanover, MD 21076
(410) 799-7700 or
(800) 270-9689
www.cexp.com
Codes: 1, 2

Diamond Paper Co.

21955 Cascades Parkway
Sterling, VA 20166
(703) 450-0000
Fax (703) 450-0001
Codes: 1–4

Frank Parson Paper, Inc.

2270 Beaver Road
Landover, MD 20785
(301) 386-4700
Fax (301) 773-8062
Codes: 1, 2

Office Paper Systems, Inc.

7650 Airpark Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20879
(301) 948-6301
Fax (301) 948-6302
www.opsus.com
Codes: 1, 2

Paper Plus

14803 Southlawn Lane, Bldg. A
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 424-4990
Fax (301) 279-7324
Codes: 1–4

RECYCLED PRODUCT SUPPLIERS (continued)

RIS Paper

9101 E. Hampton Drive
Capitol Heights, MD 20743
(301) 336-8833
Fax (301) 499-1214
www.rispaper.com
Codes: 1, 3

Unisource

8261 Preston Court
Jessup, MD 20794
(301) 470-4063 or
(800) 344-5522
Fax (410) 792-8059
Codes: 1–3

OTHER RECYCLED PRODUCTS

ANTIFREEZE

Multi-Parts and Services Inc.

5647 Belle Grove Road
Baltimore, MD 21225
(800) 879-6858
Fax (410) 636-2221
Antifreeze recycling equipment.

BUILDING MATERIALS

Allied Plywood Inc.

6100 Farrington Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22304
(703) 256-5800
Fax (703) 642-0032
www.awood.net
*Distributes homasote and MDF fiberboards
and recycled decking material (Trex®).*

PLASTIC LUMBER

Fisher Lumber

525 E. Gude Drive
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 424-6500
Fax (301) 424-8864
Distributes decking material (Trex®).

Sheets Wholesale

430 Mill Street
Vienna, VA 22180
(703) 938-9110
Fax (703) 938-2673
Specializes in Trex® decking.

T.W. Perry Enterprises

8131 Snouffer School Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20879
(301) 840-9600
Fax (301) 840-0076
Specializes in Trex® decking.

RECYCLED PRODUCT SUPPLIERS (continued)

DOCUMENT DESTRUCTION/ RECYCLING SERVICES

Environmental Recycling, Inc.

621 S. Pickett Street
Alexandria, VA 22304
(703) 370-3325
Fax (703) 370-3999
www.eri1.com

Shreds documents and sells shreds to paper manufacturers. Provides a certificate of destruction and an Environmental Impact Statement detailing the natural resources to be saved by the use of the paper shreds.

Office Paper Systems, Inc.

7650 Airpark Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20879
(301) 948-6301
Fax (301) 948-6302
www.opsus.com

Shreds documents and sells shreds to paper manufacturers. Provides a certificate of destruction and an Environmental Impact Statement detailing the natural resources to be saved by the use of the paper shreds.

Shred-It

850 Gude Drive, Suite G
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 315-0070 or (800) 697-4733
Fax (301) 315-9119

Shreds documents and sells shreds to paper companies for manufacture of recycled paper products. Provides a certificate of destruction and a statement of how many trees will be saved by the use of the recycled paper.